

2006

Salem County

Environmental Health Assessment

And

Improvement Plan

Prepared: October 2005

Community Background:

Salem County is a sparsely populated rural community comprised of 15 municipalities. Its 64,285 residents reside in a 346.95 square mile area giving it a population density of approximately 185 people per square mile.

Salem County's location is on New Jersey's main transportation corridor with major roads (New Jersey Turnpike, I-295, Rt. 55 and connection to I-95 via the Delaware Memorial Bridge) connecting Salem County with Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia and New York. Industry is primarily located on the Delaware River and in the Salem City area. A number of firms in chemicals, electronics and energy, including PSEG Nuclear Generating Station, make Salem County their home.

Salem County is also one of the leading agricultural counties in the state, with predominately rural towns in its eastern and central sections.

The Salem County Health Department (SCHD) is an established health department pursuant the authority of NJSA 26:3A2-1 et seq. SCHD is the certified local health agency for the provision of environmental health services delegated by the County Environmental Health Act (CEHA) and the Environmental Health Standards of Administrative Procedure; NJAC 7:1H – 2.1 et seq.

Goals and Activities:

Salem County's Environmental Assessment and Improvement Plan considers local environmental concerns within the context of the CEHA Grant and State approved work-plan. Salem County Health Department will operate pursuant the authority delegated to SCHD through the NJDEP and CEHA.

Goal: Clean Air

Activities: Inspect minor and B source air permitted facilities to determine compliance with the State's air pollution control regulations.

Conduct inspections at potential facilities that may require air permits as needed.

Conduct odor and emission complaint investigations received from citizens and NJDEP. Implement actions to have the source of the complaints corrected.

Deliverables: Submit all compliance monitoring inspection reports to NJDEP's Minor Source Compliance Investigation Program within 45 days of completing the inspection.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions and forward all enforcement records according to NJDEP protocols.

Resources: SCHD currently has a vacancy for a full time Environmental Specialist. A part time PHI is trained in visual emissions investigations. 2 Inspectors have training in odor complaint investigations. No other local agencies perform this type of work and no inter-local service agreements for the air program are in place.

Vehicles are available to staff for travel to and from inspection sites. A computer with internet access is available for this program.

Goal: Clean and Plentiful Water

Local Environmental Issues:

Salem County is experiencing a substantial increase in development. Land use issues, wetland issues and drinking water issues are more in the spotlight than in recent years. Municipal Boards are requesting information from the SCHD concerning ground and drinking water quality issues.

SCHD is also working with and providing information to Soil Conservation in support of a grant project concerning

The Health Department will continue to provide water quality educational information to residents and businesses as well as linking them to resources to assist them in maintaining regulatory compliance.

As a leading agricultural community Salem County has several migrant labor camps. SCHD participates with the EPA and NJDEP in the migrant labor camp drinking water monitoring program. This program assures safe drinking water to the transient migrant community.

Poor soils and high water tables contribute to a large number of subsurface sewage disposal system failures. Several cases involving discharges to surface water have been detected and corrected eliminating a source of contamination to our waters.

Salem County has expanded the inspection program of facilities with registered Under Ground Storage Tanks (USTs). A co-operative agreement with NJDEP and Cumberland County allows environmental officials to monitor tanks for leak protection requirements and leaking product that has the potential to contaminate drinking water. Violators will receive enforcement notices and actions.

Safe Drinking Water & UST

Activities: Inspect non-transient PNC systems at least every two years and transient PNC systems at least every four years.

Continue to implement the NJDEP Zero Tolerance Policy for PNC systems found in violation. Periodically review the NJDEP public water database (PWS) to determine if any PNC systems have failed to sample as required. Undertake enforcement action to return violators to compliance. Provide correct updated information on PNC system status to NJDEP

Continue to collect drinking water samples at migrant farm camp wells. Mid season samples will be collected and analyzed for bacteria, nitrate and chlorine residual. If exceedances in drinking water standards are identified, appropriate compliance and enforcement activities will be taken to assure a safe drinking water supply.

Deliverables: Submit all compliance monitoring inspection reports to NJDEP Bureau of Safe Drinking Water.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions and forward all enforcement records according to NJDEP protocols including Notice of Violation/Offer of Settlement policies.

Report findings of migrant farm camp well samples to USEPA at the conclusion of the season.

Resources: One REHS is trained in facility inspections and zero tolerance policies. SCHD works closely with the local laboratories to receive up to date sampling results and assure timely sampling for registered facilities. Penalties are deposited into the SCHD EQEF. An inter-local service agreement is being prepared to cover the UST program and to allow the Salem County Inspectors to enforce the UST regulations in Salem County as well as Cumberland County.

A computer with an internal modem is provided for connection to the PWS. A laptop is provided for the UST inspector. Vehicles are available for travel to and from inspection sites.

Water Pollution Control

Activities: Investigate all water pollution complaints received by citizens and the NJDEP. Implement actions to have the source of the complaints corrected.

Maintain files and notify NJDEP of all enforcement actions taken.

Assure that recreational beach monitoring is performed. Perform pollution source investigations.

Each season compile, from all municipalities within the county, the list of recreational bathing areas on lakes or streams, bacteriological sampling results, and the number of beach closings due to water quality impairments.

Deliverables: At the end of the season, submit recreational beach water monitoring results electronically to the NJDEP.

Resources: SCHD employs a full time REHS trained to perform sanitary surveys of beaches. All SCHD inspection staff are available to respond to and investigate water pollution complaints. All inspectors have a computer with internet access and vehicles available to travel to investigation sites. A computer, with Microsoft Excel software and an internet connection is available for electronic submission of sample results.

Goal: Safe and Health Communities

Local Environmental Issues:

Salem County's location on a major transportation corridor creates an area which may be impacted by motor vehicle accidents requiring haz-mat response. SCHD has an agreement with SCOEM and City of Vineland Haz-Mat Team for emergency response. The City of Vineland Haz-Mat Team has expanded its response capabilities as part of the inter-agency agreement. They now have the capacity to mobilize a quick response recon team as well as their full response team.

The environmental response to terrorism threats is an ongoing concern. Environmental first responders are receiving training for response to an incident. SCHD will continue working closely with the Salem County Prosecutor's Office, local law enforcement, Salem County OEM, and through a mutual aid agreement, the Cumberland County OEM to coordinate systems and responses.

Recycling rates within the County need to be improved. Through a partnership with the Salem County Utilities Authority, the SCHD is working to promote and enforce recycling in accordance with the County's Solid Waste Management Plan.

Site Remediation Program

Activities: Assure response to all hazardous materials emergencies referred by NJDEP to assess environmental health threats and advise hazardous materials response units accordingly. Make recommendations to and coordinate these response actions with appropriate federal, state and local agencies. Ensure that personnel assigned to respond to haz-mat incidents are properly trained and participating in a medical surveillance program.

Investigate hazardous materials complaints received from citizens and NJDEP. Follow the SOPs for LEC cases.
Refer cases requiring remedial action to NJDEP.

Deliverables: Work with Salem County Office of Emergency Management and prepare reports of all hazardous materials responses. Submit to NJDEP proof of meeting PEOSHA health and safety training requirements.

Follow NJDEP protocols and guidelines for UST inspections. Submit inspection reports as required to NJDEP.

Resources: SCHD maintains a shared service agreement with SCOEM for hazardous materials response and investigation. Salem County maintains a formal inter-local service agreement with the City of Vineland for Hazardous Materials Team response within Salem County.

A vehicle is supplied for response to incidents.

OVA equipment will be on long term loan from the Department in order to complete UST inspections.

Solid Waste Program

Activities: Continue to investigate all solid waste complaints received from citizens and NJDEP.

Conduct routine compliance monitoring inspections of Class A, B & C recycling facilities, convenience centers and farmland mulch sites. Continue to update the list of these sites and provide to NJDEP. As requested, conduct inspections of contaminated soil sites.

Continue to monitor solid waste haulers to ensure compliance with the Solid Waste Management Act, and conduct interviews of transporters referred by NJDEP.

Continue compliance monitoring inspection of all other delegated solid waste facilities.

Monitor storage of scrap tires in accordance with the Solid Waste Regulations. Take enforcement actions as required.

Perform routine recycling questionnaires.

Deliverables: Enforce the State Solid Waste Management Act and initiate enforcement proceedings pursuant to NJDEP guidelines.

Submit all solid waste inspections to NJDEP of review.

Notify NJDEP of enforcement actions according to policy.

Resources: SCHD has a full time REHS designated to the solid waste program. This investigator works closely with the Salem County Improvement Authority.

A vehicle is available for all field inspections.

Noise Control

Activities: Investigate noise complaints received from citizens and the NJDEP that are under the jurisdiction of the Noise Control Regulations, and if applicable, enforce those regulations to achieve compliance. As requested by local officials and others provide guidance on noise regulations and noise prevention and abatement.

Deliverables: Maintain records of all complaint investigations.

Maintain current staff certifications for noise control programs.

Resources: SCHD employs a REHS who is certified in noise complaint investigation. SCHD maintains a quest sound meter to be used for noise complaint investigations.

A vehicle is available for response to complaints.

Goal: Open and Effective Government

Activities: Encourage and develop strategic partnerships with other local, state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, environmental commissions, the general public and the business community to address environmental issues and concerns.

Provide education and outreach as well as environmental data to community groups.

Deliverables: SCHD will continue its relationship with Cumberland County Health Department concerning shared services for a Health Officer and an Environmental Coordinator as well as an UST inspector.

SCHD will continue its agreement with the SCOEM and City of Vineland concerning response to hazardous material incidents.

SCHD has formed a task group with the SCOEM, local hospitals, County Prosecutor's Office and the local police to work on terrorism response.

SCHD will continue to work with local water testing laboratories in order to better serve the public and business in the community concerning water testing guidelines and requirements.

SCHD will form a partnership and work closely with Salem County Utilities Authority concerning solid waste issues.

SCHD will hold town meetings and work with local governments in communities that have special environmental concerns.

SCHD will continue to provide outreach and education on environmental issues to the effected communities. A full time Health Educator / Risk Communicator has been added to the Cumberland / Salem Health Department staff. This individual is available to all divisions to provide educational fact sheets, press releases and risk communication.

SCHD will participate in the Cumberland County, Salem County and Gloucester County Watershed management meetings.